

A small incident that elated my egotism occurred when I took Gene Wierbach through the Oriental Museum of The University of Chicago. One case against the wall, containing Samaritan books and bibles, had one prayer book placed in a "upside-down" direction. I happen to be one of the few people in the United States who can read this ancient script, which is even older than Hebrew. I called the attention of one of the men in charge to the "upside-down" prayer book, and he said that he would see that this book was placed correctly. Even places of authority such as The University of Chicago make mistakes.

My second linguistic test came when I had to address in Russian script to a cousin now located in a Russian camp for the expatriated in Lithuania. I had only one year of Russian in the Gymnasium in Lithuania when I was nine or ten years old, and I had to do a great deal of recalling and calling upon my wits and memory, but "I do'd it" and made a neat job too. Boy, ain't I good! How about someone patting my back?

One of the pleasures of last month was the meeting of Devi-Dja, the outstanding exponent of the Balinese and Indonesian dances. Her type of work is my great love, and it was like attaining Nirvana when I watched her and her troupe perform. She is such a dainty and unassuming person that it was, indeed, a pleasure to talk to her, especially since we had this particular type of dance in common.

Extending my sincerest greetings to all my friends for a joyous Christmastide, I'm ever mindful of all those who came to my assistance during the months of my illness and confinement at Cottage Hill: the doctor and nurses for their care; Mr. Raby and the St. Vincent De Paul Society for his weekly visits, gifts, and personal friendship; the Jesuit fathers, McHardy and Cronin, for their administrations, visits, and personal friendship; Mrs. Leslie Bonnell and her family for seeing me through it all; many Fairhopeans for their assistance; and other friends who helped make my stay at Cottage Hill more pleasant. Thanks to the assistance of all these, my friends and thanks to God, the Healer and Life-giver, I am able to celebrate this Christmas among the living.

A Merry Christmas to you all.
Pasimatysim, Vyts-Fin.

RECENT BOOKS

THREE DAY PASS

Another of our VILTIS members achieves fame in the literary field; our friend PFC Leslie Waller's first novel, THREE DAY PASS, is published by Viking Press.

Leslie, now 22 years old, was inducted in January, 1943. He was student and research assistant in chemistry at the U. of Chicago until inducted. He associated with PULSE, the U. of Chicago student magazine; he has been police reporter, a counsellor in a boy's camp, and has contributed to YANK and OUR ARMY. Photography and Hot Piano were among his hobbies.

THREE DAY PASS, as the name implies, deals with incidents that took place during his leave in New York with the girl he loves, who came from Canada where she served as a Canadian WAC. Three days of slumming, night clubbing, making love (with the same girl) and reflecting. The incidents are not breath-taking but they are natural and typical of what happens to any John Ryder and his girl friend in time of war, with the prospect of going overseas before him. The interludes of reflection taking the form of questioning and answering himself, are interesting; The style is peculiar, somewhat reminiscent of Gertrude Stein. How often we find ourselves

thinking in that particular manner, thoughts wandering and incoherent and nonsensical, or using phrases in foreign languages which do not translate. Many, no doubt, will criticize these flash-backs and the style of them, but it is his style.

I am not a book critic, but I found the book interesting and entertaining More power to you, Leslie. VFB.

LITHUANIA'S FIGHT FOR FREEDOM

E. J. Harrison, formerly British Vice-Counsel in Kaunas and Vilnius, who has written many books on Lithuania, recently wrote his latest, Lithuania's Fight for Freedom. The book is very comprehensive and instructive as well as revealing. Originally printed in England, it was reprinted by the Lithuanian American Information Center, 233 Broadway, New York 7, N. Y., and sells for 50c. The book contains a concise historical sketch that includes her ancient religion, language and history; but it dwells mainly on the Russian and German invasion, the oppression and sorrow she suffered, and the struggle she is going through now. It is a grim story that opens eyes of many people.

The Appendix contains a translation of the original Russian Text for the deportation of the people from the Baltic States; marked "Strictly Secret" and signed by the Commissars of Public Security of the Third Rank, Serov, it gives the orders of procedure for the midnight raids upon families, the breaking up of family units, and the manner of deportations typical of Nazi methods. It is like reading an edict written by one of the Third Reich.

COMMENTS and LETTERS ...

FROM MANILA

DISCRIMINATION IN U. S.

Dear Pal: You might be interested in a bit for VIL-TIS concerning the fine work the Nisei boys, who compose the greater part of our unit, have done in the Pacific Campaigns. Military intelligence men, veterans of campaigns dating back to the early days of the war, they have earned themselves plenty medals for daring work as interpreters attached to front line units and for interrogation and the interpreting of captured documents. If the people of the States who are so prejudiced against the American-Japanese knew these men as we know them here there would be plenty of red faces and regrets for past actions.

Among other things I am recruiting officer of my unit and have the job of reenlisting men under the Army's new plan. One of the common reasons of the men who come up to ask questions about enlistments is that they don't want to go home to the States and face the prejudice they find there, particularly those from the west coast. They would rather stay in the Army and let tempers cool.

Always, Jim.

Lt. James Casebere,
Manila, P. I.

FROM DAC IN CHINA

Dear Fin:

I am belatedly answering your letter and thanking you for the copies of Viltis which I enjoy very much. Little did I think when I talked with you at home in Fairhope of that one day I would visit here. Yet always I seemed to believe in a way with a certainty that I would see India and China, and to add to that — Burma. This picture was taken beside a Buddhist temple high on the banks of the Irrawaddy looking towards the Himalayas and Thibet. Below me some Burmese were poling their bamboo sheltered boat against the current and singing

in the high sweet Burmese tongue. Time seemed to stand still and later meeting a monk in the saffron robe and umbrella, with shaven head completed the picture. Later that day I went to the Bazaar to trade candy for a conical hat of finely woven bamboo and to the collection of Buddhist temples near a lotus pool. Fin, do you remember the water narcissus that grow at home? There among the exotic lotus I found them also and a Burmese girl in a sarong and a flower in her hair gathering them for the shrine nearby, and it was like meeting an old friend again.

I've traveled through three Provinces of China via the Stillwell Road and I can say this is a beautiful land and very mountainous. Have you seen pictures of the Road and how it winds a mongst the peaks? At times we were far above the clouds and at other times amongst them. And after each climb there would be a fertile plateau and beyond that other ranges until I thought we would bump into the ghandava's of the Hindu heaven. I shall never forget the first time I saw a walled Chinese city, the odors and color and the humans as thick as ants.

Please write me and tell me how you are progressing. I hope you will have all success in all your undertakings and that the Gods will be kind to you, Dae.

T/5 A. G. Dacovich, China:

(We regret the picture was not clear for reproduction — V.F.B.)

FROM INDIA

Dear Vyts ... One of the letters I got after reaching India is yours. Viltis certainly brought me closer to the States. I left Boston on the very eventful V-J day, September 2.

We don't know what we are going to do here. It seems that everybody is clamoring to go back to the States. I'm not too optimistic about my return to the States but they say that the India Theatre is going to be closed by next February.

India is poor in everything. The poverty of the Hindus is almost not describable with words. I guess to be an American is really a privilege.

They are shipping back about 30,000 service men per month from Calcutta alone. I hope to be one of them some day.

Yours sincerely, Bill.
Lt. William E. Soong, Calcutta, India.

A TOKIO VISIT

Dear Vyts Course you heard that our last trip was that to Japan. We didn't go directly into Tokyo, but 30 miles south, Yokohama, which is in Tokyo Bay. We did get liberty there, but the Americans bombed the hell out of everything, except the Imperial Palace. We spent hours just looking at a ruined city. The people are quite poverty stricken, and it is not an odd scene to see several Japs trailing the sailors in hopes that they might be fortunate enough to pick up an American cigarette butt. The money situation is terrible. To change a ten-spot would bring about two bushels full of currency. There is absolutely nothing worth buying. I might also add, I am eagerly awaiting the arrival of your "Scope."

Well, Vyts ole boy, guess I'll lift the anchor now, bye. Ed.

Eddie Wolod, Yeo 2/C
Manila, P. I.

Christmastide Cheer to Viltis and Readers

DEAN F. SAXTON, Ph. M3/C
GREAT LAKES, ILL.



JACK SOLOMON FUND

The many friends of Jack Solomon, who was recently killed on Okinawa, have opened a drive to perpetuate his memory in the form of a yearly scholarship at the Circle Pines School of Cooperation, at Circle Pines, Michigan. Jack, whom I have known for eight years, was a very enthusiastic lad and a strong believer in the Co-op movement. He was a good folk dancer and a hard worker, ever setting an example by his industry and enthusiasm. This form of memorial is commendable and worthy of support, even by those who did not know Jack. If interested, please send your contribution to Lorraine and Mildred Meyer's, 607 E. Daniles St. Champaign, Illinois.

IN MEMORIAM



To The Two Divin Brothers
Sgts. LOU J., and JOE M.

Sgt. Lou Divin was killed in Action on April 11th this year (1945), at the age of 33. He joined the U. S. Armed forces in February of 1944 and went to England in March, 1944. He landed with the 1st Army on D-Day and later joined the 3rd Army, 90th Division. He was wounded in December, 1944, in the leg. He won six battle stars.

Here I reprint the citation describing Joe's heroic death on Guam on August 7th, 1944, as received with the Distinguished Service Cross.

"For extraordinary heroism in action against the enemy on 7 August, 1944. While directing his tank during a coordinated tank-infantry action to break through an enemy strong point near Yigo, Guam, Sgt. Divin's vehicle was hit by anti-tank fire and set afire. Though painfully and seriously wounded, he attempted to traverse the jammed turret so that crew members could escape through the drivers hatch. Unable to move the gun because of the damage to his mechanism, Sgt. Divin placed a tourniquet on his leg to conserve his strength and by extraordinary effort, in the face of continuous fire, drew himself out of the turret hatch, thus clearing the only other exit for the trapped crew. Divin was directing their escape from the burning tank when he was killed by enemy machine gun fire. His supreme heroism, gallantry and unselfish concern for the safety of his crew saved their lives at the expense of his own."

Joe was 38 when killed, was Tank Commander on a light tank. He entered the service in March 1942 and went overseas in April of 1944.

Joe and Lou are survived by loving parents, four sisters and two brothers. The youngest brother helped take Attu, in the Aleutians, and is now discharged. The Divin family are residents of Nampa, Idaho.

To the Divins we extend our heartfelt sympathies and may the merciful God grant that there will be no more sorrow in their midst.